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ABSTRACT

These standards are provided to promote the achievement of excellence in Maryland's public school prekindergarten programs. To that end, this document delineates standards of quality and provides a list of indicators that concretely describe what a program will look like if the standards are being met. The standards and indicators address seven areas, all of which have been shown to contribute to quality in programs for young children. The areas are program administration, prekindergarten program operation, home-school cooperation, staff development, continuity of learning, program accountability, and comprehensive programing. Standards are offered as a compendium of appropriate practices for working with young children and their families, as a tool for self-study and appraisal, and as a guide for developing new programs, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of existing programs, and identifying and recognizing programs that meet standards of quality. An appendix lists the minimum contents of a well-supplied library, reading/writing, mathematics, housekeeping, grocery store, blocks, sand table, water table, games/puzzles, and art learning centers in the prekindergarten classroom. Citations number 85. (RH)

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STANDARDS FOR IMPLEMENTING QUALITY PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

EXTENDED ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAM

Quality
Commitment
Success

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FOREWORD

As public schools become a major provider of early childhood education and child care, they can expect more and more scrutiny. It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to ensure that our prekindergarten education programs fully enhance the total development of all children and that they do so in developmentally appropriate ways.

Public school prekindergarten program providers must believe that all children are capable of learning and learn best through methods and in environments that respect their individual development, developmental characteristics, and interests. Program staff must also subscribe to the idea that the best learning environment for young children is one that is safe, interesting, and exciting, and provides opportunities for children to learn through play. An integrated program in which learning occurs through a balance of independent projects in learning centers and adult-facilitated activities creates just such an environment.

A major determinant of the quality of an early childhood program is the degree to which the program is responsive to the developmental characteristics of young children. The standards detailed herein offer clear and direct statements for ensuring that prekindergarten programs are developmentally appropriate and that school staff create learning environments for four-year-olds that are productive, effective, and long-lasting in postive outcomes.

These standards are intended to bring useful information to those in the process of creating developmentally appropriate prekindergarten programs. However, true success will only occur if this document is actually utilized by administrators in planning, monitoring, and evaluating programs and by program staff in implementing programs that model the enthusiasm young children have for learning. I believe it will be an invaluable resource to anyone responsible for the education of young children.

The need to provide high quality early childhood education has never been more pressing. Research has just begun to show that only high quality programs have a positive long-term impact on children's total development. As teachers, school administrators, parents, and other program providers throughout the state work together to meet the challenge of building quality programs, I am confident that their commitment, expertise, and constant concern will pay off in enriched childhoods and improved life chances for all of Maryland's four-year-olds.

Joseph L. Shilling
State Superintendent of Schools

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I. INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to ensure excellence in Maryland's public school prekindergarten programs. As such, it delineates standards of quality and provides a list of indicators that concretely describe what a program will look like if the standards are being met. The standards and indicators address seven areas, all of which have been shown to contribute to quality in programs for young children. These areas are:

1. Program Administration
2. Prekindergarten Program Operation
3. Home-School Cooperation
4. Staff Development
5. Continuity of Learning
6. Program Accountability
7. Comprehensive Programming

The prekindergarten standards were developed by the Maryland State Department of Education with input from early childhood educators in local school systems, colleges, universities, and agencies throughout the state. The initial list was developed using information gleaned from on-site visits to prekindergartens in local schools and from a thorough review of the literature on the elements of effective early childhood programs. During the 1984-85 school year, the initial list was field tested in 20 schools and then revised.

Three subsequent revisions had two sources of influence. The first was feedback from local school systems, colleges, and advocacy groups throughout the state. The second was the use of the standards, along with criteria developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, in piloting a prekindergarten certification-accreditation project.

The second revised set of standards was agreed upon by two independent committees that met in the summer of 1986. During the 1986-87 school year, the working copy was used by ten local schools as a vehicle for self-appraisal. In the spring of 1987 and 1989, the working copies were again revised in order to ensure that the indicators for the standards were concrete, specific, and clearly stated.

This final set of standards represents statewide consensus on what constitutes quality in public school prekindergarten programs. Its practical use as an instrument for program assessment and improvement has been demonstrated. It is thus offered to professionals for use in the following ways:

1. By prekindergarten teachers, principals, and supervisors as a compendium of appropriate practices for working with young children and their families.

2. By local schools as a tool for self-study and appraisal.

3. By local education agencies as a guide for:

   a. developing new programs,

   b. assessing the strengths and weaknesses of existing programs,

   c. identifying and recognizing programs that meet standards of quality.

4. By the Maryland State Department of Education as a means for:

    a. identifying promising practices in the implementation of quality public school prekindergarten programs.

    b. validating and recognizing excellence in the operation of public school prekindergarten programs across the state.

II. PHILOSOPHY

Development is the dynamic, continuous and inside-out process of growing through predictable stages of maturity in uneven patterns or rhythms. In the process of development, the intellectual, physical, and emotional aspects of the child are inextricably interwoven and cannot be promoted in isolation from one another. Development, therefore, expands the whole child, not parts of the child piece by piece.

Each child is a unique individual with his own history, personality, ways of learning, strengths, interests, and needs. Each child is also a part of a social network that includes family, community, nation, and world. As the child, as a unique individual, interacts in the cultures of his social milieu, the course of his development is molded and cast.

The beliefs children hold about themselves are powerful determinants of the directions in which they develop. Persons who share in the child's development must continuously affirm and re-affirm his worth and dignity as a unique individual. So also must they accept and acknowledge the value and integrity of the child's family and culture.

Young children are active and spontaneous, creative and curious. They are capable of self-direction. The inner forces of development drive them to learn. Play is a primary means by which they learn how to learn. As children research and adventure into their expanding environments, play promotes their development.

Young children are problem solvers in quest of meaning. Their learning is continuous, not limited by persons, places or time. Their learning is integrated, not compartmentalized, and holistic, not fragmented by domain. Children's learning is most meaningful when it is concrete, active, and experiential. Children's learning is most relevant when it stems from their own interests and relates to their own life's experiences.

The purpose of the prekindergarten program is to educate the whole child in ways that are appropriate to his level of development and sensitive to his/her individual characteristics. The program should help children acquire a positive self-image and find joy in learning. It should extend their emerging competencies as thinkers and communicators and encourage their independence and decisionmaking. The program should nurture and promote each child's uniqueness as an individual with particular strengths, interests, and preferences, and begin to help each child grow into the "life and likenesses" of the society of which s(he) forms a part.

The prekindergarten program should provide for each child's present needs while building on his prior knowledge and laying a foundation for future learning. It should enable children who learn at different rates and in different ways to work at different levels on different activities. The program should be flexible enough to address differences among children.

The prekindergarten teacher should establish a predictable, stable, and nurturing environment in which each child feels valued, safe, and secure. (S)he should observe children and use the insights to plan a program based on direct experience and interaction with materials and peers. The teacher should mediate children's learning through the provision of guided activities, and facilitate children's learning by arranging the environment for their self-directed play.

The teacher should use a variety of strategies to encourage and support children as they work alone and together to make their own discoveries, take risks, and learn through trial and error. (S)he should provide opportunities for children to be scientists and artists, actors and authors. Above all, the prekindergarten teacher should believe that each child has potential, accept each child as (s)he is and help all children begin to realize their unlimited possibilities.

The prekindergarten program should do all that is necessary to form a seamless space between home and school. Program staff should initiate and sustain communication with children's parents and share with them in promoting children's healthy development and educational success. The entire school staff should join hands with the community in safeguarding the welfare and rights of all the young children the prekindergarten program and subsequent primary grades serve.

III. PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE PREKINDERGARTEN STANDARDS

The prekindergarten standards rest on six major principles. These principles directed their development and should guide their use:

1. The basic elements of quality in public school prekindergarten programs are the same regardless of their location, funding source, and/or purposes.

2. When combined in different ways, the basic elements of quality manifest themselves in different forms. This diversity should be acknowledged, accepted, respected, and encouraged.

3. Developing and maintaining quality public school prekindergarten programs is a collaborative effort in which local school staff, central office personnel, and the Maryland State Department of Education each have an integral and important role for which they must be held accountable.

4. Prekindergarten program improvement is most effective and long lasting when school staff voluntarily engages in a systematic process of self-appraisal and identifies the changes that are needed in order to bring about and/or maintain quality.

5. School staff that implement quality prekindergarten programs should be recognized for their hard work, commitment, and attainments.

6. In evaluating the quality of an early childhood education program, the most crucial aspect is the quality of the daily experiences for children.

IV. PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM STANDARDS

1.0 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Effective central office program administration is a key ingredient in the successful implementation of the program at each school. Through the development of a written philosophy, the identification of efficient operational policies, the hiring of competent and committed staff, and the provision of consistent supervision, central office personnel lay the foundation for school staff to focus on implementing developmentally appropriate programs.

Program Philosophy

STANDARD 1.1 A WRITTEN PHILOSOPHY IS USED AS THE BASIS FOR PROGRAM PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION, AND MODIFICATION.

Program Personnel

STANDARD 1.2 THE PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM IS SUPERVISED, ADMINISTERED, AND IMPLEMENTED BY CERTIFICATED EARLY CHILDHOOD PERSONNEL.

Prekindergarten Program Policies

STANDARD 1.3 SYSTEMWIDE POLICIES ARE USED AS THE BASIS FOR EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM OPERATION AT EACH SCHOOL.

2.0 PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM OPERATION

A high quality prekindergarten program places as much emphasis on the process of learning as on the content. It capitalizes on children's natural curiosity to promote their growth as language users and thinkers. It provides a wide variety of planned experiences that enable children to learn through interaction, exploration, manipulation, and self-discovery.

High quality prekindergarten programs offer young children support and encouragement as they strive to become confident and competent social beings, problem solvers, decisionmakers, and composers. Above all, a high quality program gives children recognition and respect as they endeavor to act on, understand, and expand the world they already know.

Curriculum

STANDARD 2.1 EACH SCHOOL SYSTEM HAS A BOARD-APPROVED PREKINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM THAT SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOTAL CHILD AND PROVIDES FOR PLANNED AND SYSTEMATIC LEARNING THROUGH THE USE OF APPROPRIATE METHODS.

Assessment

STANDARD 2.2 CHILDREN'S GROWTH IN ALL DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS IS ROUTINELY ASSESSED. ASSESSMENTS OF CHILDREN ARE USED FOR PROGRAM PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION.

Learning Process

STANDARD 2.3 ALL CHILDREN HAVE EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN THROUGH TEACHER-DIRECTED AND SELF-INITIATED EXPERIENCES THAT MATCH THEIR NEEDS, INTERESTS, AND DEVELOPMENTAL LEVELS.

Questioning

STANDARD 2.4 CHILDREN HAVE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO INQUIRE ABOUT THEIR ENVIRONMENT, REFLECT ON THEIR EXPERIENCES, AND DEVELOP SKILL IN COMMUNICATION BY ASKING AND RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS.

Language and Literacy

STANDARD 2.5 THE DAILY PROGRAM IMMERSES CHILD REN IN A WIDE RANGE OF COMMUNICATIVE EXPERIENCES AND LITERACY EVENTS THAT PROMOTE THEIR CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT, ENCOURAGE THEM TO EXPRESS THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS, AND HELP THEM ATTAIN SELF-DETERMINED GOALS.

Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science

STANDARD 2.6 CHILDREN'S CURIOSITY ABOUT NATURAL, MAN-MADE, AND SOCIAL PHENOMENA AND THEIR NATURAL INCLINATION TO INVESTIGATE AND SOLVE PROBLEMS IS NURTURED AND STIMULATED THROUGH A DAILY BALANCE OF GUIDED AND INDEPENDENT EXPERIENCES IN SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND MATHEMATICS.

Psychomotor and the Arts

STANDARD 2.7 CHILDREN'S NATURAL INCLINATION TO TEST THEIR LIMITS AND RE-CREATE EXPERIENCE IS NURTURED AND STIMULATED THROUGH A DAILY BALANCE OF GUIDED AND INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES IN MUSIC, MOVEMENT, AND THE ARTS.

Self-Concept and Socialization

STANDARD 2.8 ADULTS CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH CHILDREN CAN SHOW INITIATIVE, ACT INDEPENDENTLY, AND MAKE CHOICES. ADULTS OBSERVE, GUIDE, AND RESPECT CHILDREN AS THEY STRIVE FOR PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE.

Physical Environment

STANDARD 2.9 THE PREKINDERGARTEN ENVIRONMENT EVOLVES FROM CHILDREN'S NEEDS, INTERESTS, AND EXPERIENCES; FACILITATES THEIR INDEPENDENCE, EXPLORATION, AND DISCOVERY; AND REFLECTS THEIR IDEAS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND PRODUCTS.

Health and Safety

STANDARD 2.10 CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY ARE ENSURED THROUGHOUT EACH PROGRAM DAY.

3.0 HOME-SCHOOL COOPERATION

Home-school cooperation is based on recognition of and respect for the critical role parents play in children's healthy development and success as learners. In a quality prekindergarten program, a mutual exchange between parents and teachers enables parents to support children's development in positive ways and become active participants in helping children learn.

STANDARD 3.1 COOPERATION BETWEEN THE HOME AND SCHOOL RESULTS IN PARENTAL SUPPORT OF AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE TOTAL SCHOOL PROGRAM.

4.0 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

A systematically implemented staff development program enables early childhood staff to stay abreast of and use emerging and established knowledge in the field. It most effectively contributes to program quality when it matches staff needs and interests to program goals and results in developmentally appropriate and effective programs for young children.

STANDARD 4.1 THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND/OR SCHOOL SEEKS AND PROVIDES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE EARLY LEARNING STAFF IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN THEIR COMPETENCIES IN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN.

5.0 CONTINUITY OF LEARNING, PREKINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE ONE

Schools that operate quality programs recognize the importance of the primary grades in sustaining prekindergarten's effects. They actively support the idea that education should be accommodated to the interests and developmental level of each child, rather than the child to the expectations and performance standards of the school. Schools with quality programs enable all children to progress at their own pace and learn in their own ways without being labeled, stigmatized or penalized.

STANDARD 5.1 PREKINDERGARTEN, KINDERGARTEN, AND FIRST GRADE ARE VIEWED AS A SINGLE UNIT, EACH LEVEL OF WHICH ACCEPTS CHILDREN 'AS THEY ARE' AND PROVIDES AGE AND INDIVIDUALLY APPROPRIATE LEARNING EXPERIENCES THAT ENABLE EACH CHILD TO PROGRESS AS FAR AS HIS/HER OWN DEVELOPING INTERESTS AND ABILITIES ALLOW.

6.0 PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

Program accountability involves central office personnel and school staff in the process of evaluating both the current quality and long-term impact of the prekindergarten program. Program accountability is most effective when its value is recognized, it is perceived as a learning experience, and the results are used to maintain or improve the quality of the program for the sake of the children it serves.

STANDARD 6.1 THE (SCHOOL) SYSTEM EVALUATES ITS EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM ON AN ANNUAL BASIS AND USES THE RESULTS TO ACKNOWLEDGE ITS STRENGTHS AND ADDRESS ITS WEAKNESSES.

7.0 COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMMING

As more and more children grow up in homes in which both or the only parent work, the need for child care is increasing in major proportions. Educational programs for four and five-year-olds that are only half-day and for elementary grade children that are shorter than the typical work day create a time gap in which neither school nor home supervise and nurture the young. In order to address this problem and become increasingly responsive to the needs of working parents, school systems must develop policies that make good sense for both children and their families. As they do so they will collaborate with other agencies in establishing early childhood ecosystems that include not only high quality education, but also high quality care.

STANDARD 7.1 THE SCHOOL SYSTEM PROVIDES LEADERSHIP IN PROMOTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS THAT MEET THE CHILD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION NEEDS OF FAMILIES IN THE COMMUNITY.

V. DESCRIPTORS FOR THE STANDARDS

The indicators that accompany the standards describe what the standards look, feel, and sound like in actual practice. The indicators thus serve as practical tools for developing and implementing a quality prekindergarten program. They also provide specific criteria for ascertaining whether the standards are being met. The indicators listed in this document are key criteria for the implementation of a quality early learning program. Therefore, all or most must be evident in order to conclude that the standards are being met.

1.0 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

STANDARD 1.1 **A WRITTEN PHILOSOPHY IS USED AS THE BASIS FOR PROGRAM PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION, AND MODIFICATION.**

INDICATORS

1.1.1 The concepts in the school system philosophy are consistent with those in the Maryland State Department of Education's philosophy for the early learning years.

1.1.2 The philosophy is shared in written form with all personnel in each school who administer and implement the program.

1.1.3 The philosophy is evident in program practices at the school and classroom level.

STANDARD 1.2 **THE PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM IS SUPERVISED, ADMINISTERED, AND IMPLEMENTED BY CERTIFICATED EARLY CHILDHOOD PERSONNEL.**

INDICATORS

1.2.1 The program supervisor has at least two years of satisfactory experience in working with children ages 0-9 and one of the following: 18 credit hours in early childhood education, an undergraduate or graduate degree in early childhood education, or state certification in early childhood education.

1.2.2 The supervisor informs the principal at each school about the practices that should be evident in a developmentally appropriate program.

1.2.3 The supervisor provides feedback to program staff at each school about their progress in implementing a developmentally appropriate program.

1.2.4 The prekindergarten teacher has state certification in early childhood education.

1.2.5 A paid assistant is assigned to each prekindergarten classroom on a full-time basis.

1.2.6 The assistant has a high school diploma or equivalent and experience in working with young children.

STANDARD 1.3 SYSTEMWIDE POLICIES ARE USED AS THE BASIS FOR EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM OPERATION AT EACH SCHOOL.

INDICATORS

1.3.1 The school uses a policy developed by the school system to recruit children for the prekindergarten program.

1.3.2 The children in each prekindergarten session are representative of the communities the school serves in terms of socioeconomic level, race, and ethnicity.

1.3.3 Twenty children are enrolled per prekindergarten session.

1.3.4 The school system develops an attendance policy for prekindergarten. The school uses the system's policy.

1.3.5 Each prekindergarten session operates for a minimum of 150 minutes daily, five days a week, excluding breakfast and lunch.

1.3.6 The school system ensures that each program has the materials and supplies it needs to implement a developmentally appropriate program.

1.3.7 The school system identifies a person to provide instructional support to prekindergarten through first grade staff at each school.

1.3.8 The person who is identified to provide instructional support is qualified by education, training, and/or experience.

1.3.9 The school system recognizes schools that meet the standards of quality identified by the Maryland State Department of Education and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

1.3.10 Each year, the school informs parents in the community about Maryland's law pertaining to school entry age and explains the options it provides.

2.0 PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM OPERATION

STANDARD 2.1 **EACH SCHOOL SYSTEM HAS A BOARD-APPROVED PREKINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM THAT SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOTAL CHILD AND PROVIDES FOR PLANNED AND SYSTEMATIC LEARNING THROUGH THE USE OF APPROPRIATE METHODS.**

INDICATORS

2.1.1 The curriculum reflects the goals and subgoals for prekindergarten as set forth by the Maryland State Department of Education.

2.1.2 The curriculum identifies what skills or dispositions are to be fostered in each developmental area.

2.1.3 The content of the curriculum is appropriate in terms of the developmental characteristics of young children and how they learn.

2.1.4 The curriculum is sufficiently broad to enable the teacher to meet the needs and enhance the strengths of children with varying levels of maturity and ability.

2.1.5 The teacher's written plans correspond to the school system's curriculum and indicate that a thematic, integrated approach is being used. The written plans encompass the total day.

2.1.6 The teacher can explain how each day's plan addresses children's needs and enhances their strengths, contributes to their understanding of the concept or theme, and promotes continuity with previous learning experiences.

2.1.7 The teacher can explain how each day's plan encourages discovery and higher-order thinking skills.

2.1.8 The daily schedule provides for teacher-directed and self-initiated learning with the emphasis on the latter.

2.1.9 The daily program reflects variation in content by providing for psychomotor activity, literature, verbal and artistic expression, math, experiences in the (social) sciences, and play with a wide variety of materials.

STANDARD 2.2 **CHILDREN'S GROWTH IN ALL DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS IS ROUTINELY ASSESSED. ASSESSMENTS OF CHILDREN ARE USED FOR PROGRAM PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION.**

INDICATORS

2.2.1 **Children's growth in the cognitive, communicative, creative, socioemotional, and physical domains is informally and routinely assessed.**

2.2.2 **Informal and routine assessment consists of observing children's performance and interactions and listening to them as they talk.**

2.2.3 **Information elicited from parents about each child's experiences at home is taken into consideration in program planning and implementation.**

2.2.4 **Information about each child's growth and development is systematically collected and recorded throughout the school year. Such information may include samples of children's work, descriptions of their performance and anecdotal records.**

2.2.5 **In addition to informal methods, a formal procedure is used to share information with parents, at regular intervals, about their child's growth and development and performance in school.**

2.2.6 **Standardized testing is used only on an individual basis. When a child is formally tested his/her parents are informed in advance.**

2.2.7 **Any standardized test that is administered to a child is valid and reliable in terms of the background characteristics of the child being tested and the test's intended purposes. This is determined by a careful review of the reliability and validity information that is provided in the technical manual that accompanies the test.**

2.2.8 **When a child is tested, information about the test and test results is shared with the child's parents. Any interpretation of test scores describes, in non-technical language, what the test covered, what the scores do and do not mean (common misinterpretations of the test scores) and how the results will be used.**

2.2.9 **The school does not administer a standardized test to all children in the prekindergarten program at each school.**

2.2.10 **Each child's permanent record indicates the type of preschool program in which (s)he participated prior to first grade such as Head Start, nonpublic preschool, child care, EEEP prekindergarten, Chapter 1 prekindergarten.**

STANDARD 2.3 **ALL CHILDREN HAVE EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN THROUGH TEACHER-DIRECTED AND SELF-INITIATED EXPERIENCES THAT MATCH THEIR NEEDS, INTERESTS, AND DEVELOPMENTAL LEVELS.**

INDICATORS

2.3.1 Active learning dominates the total day. Minimal amounts of time are spent getting ready, sitting and listening, and waiting. Music, poetry, fingerplays, riddles, and language or thinking games are used to eliminate children's wait time during transitions.

2.3.2 No use is made of dittos or workbooks and passive learning methods.

2.3.3 The teacher involves every child in a directed learning experience every day.

2.3.4 For the purposes of teacher-directed learning, children are not organized into fixed ability groups.

2.3.5 Teacher-directed learning is not implemented using a system of three group rotations.

2.3.6 Teacher-directed learning is presented in the context of the child's world and relates in a meaningful way to children's real-life experiences.

2.3.7 Teacher-directed learning is carried out in a manner that enables each child to be an active participant. When manipulatives are used, enough are provided so that children can participate simultaneously.

2.3.8 Over time, teacher-directed learning addresses children's needs and interests and builds on their strengths in all developmental areas. Teacher-directed learning helps children become competent artistically, motorically, socially, linguistically and intellectually.

2.3.9 Children's self-directed learning is facilitated by the use of learning centers. These include but are not limited to.

dramatic play (not limited to housekeeping),
blocks,
art (not limited to easel painting),
library (reading-listening),
reading-writing,
mathematics,
sand/water, and
games/puzzles.

2.3.10 Each center has a wide variety of materials and activities (see Appendix).

2.3.11 Activities and materials in each center enable children to explore the current theme, reconstruct the teacher-directed learning activity, repeat experiences, demonstrate what they know, and experiment with new ways of thinking, e.g., the teacher is able to initiate different responses to some of the same materials.

2.3.12 A procedure is used to help children think about and plan their activities in the learning centers.

2.3.13 The teacher and assistant use strategies that help children carry out their plans with sustained effort. During children's self-directed activities, the teacher and assistant promote children's engagement and facilitate their learning by asking open-ended questions, suggesting alternative ways of doing something, modeling, commenting, encouraging experimentation, acknowledging their efforts,and giving praise related to their performance.

2.3.14 The teacher can explain how the activities in the centers meet children's needs, address their interests, enhance their strengths, and extend their understanding of ideas and concepts related to the current unit of study.

2.3.15 The teacher develops and uses a written recordkeeping system that describes the centers and the activities in the centers in which each child engages. The recordkeeping system is used to ensure variety in each child's choice of centers.

2.3.16 Sufficient time is allocated to transitions for children to clean up and prepare for the next activity.

STANDARD 2.4 CHILDREN HAVE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO INQUIRE ABOUT THEIR ENVIRONMENT, REFLECT ON THEIR EXPERIENCES, AND DEVELOP SKILL IN COMMUNICATION BY ASKING AND RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS.

INDICATORS

2.4.1 Children are encouraged to think and communicate their thinking in different ways by responding to many types of questions. Such questions include:

labeling (What is this called?),
describing (How does it look? What does it do?),
reconstructing past experiences (What did you do in the learning center today?),
proposing alternatives (What is another way you could...?),
making comparisons (How are they alike? What is different about them?),
classifying (How did you decide to put these things together?),
enumerating (How can we find out how many...?),
synthesizing (What do these words make you think of, "candles, presents, cake"?),
evaluating (Which painting in our museum do you like best? Why?),
predicting (What would happen if...?), and
transforming (What should we do to make...? How do you...?).

2.4.2 Adults use techniques that enable children to have confidence in their own responses and respect for the responses of others. Such techniques include:

creating a relaxed, non-threatening climate for inquiry,
encouraging brainstorming,
providing sufficient wait time before expecting children to respond,
using an open response system (limited use of raising hands),
encouraging children to take risks in making comments,
asking 'why' to gain insight into a child's response,
extending children's responses, and
providing corrective feedback that enables children to understand the appropriateness of their responses in terms of reality.

2.4.3 Children are actively involved as thinkers and communicators during group discussions. The teacher:

asks questions at a variety of levels,
asks questions that have many possible responses,
encourages responses that are more than one or two words,
provides sufficient time for responding,
refrains from re-wording or interpreting children's responses for them,
encourages children to listen to and elaborate upon each other's responses, and
listens to the children.

2.4.4 Children are encouraged to ask questions and given assistance in formulating many types of questions and using more complex questioning strategies.

2.4.5 Children are provided honest and age-appropriate responses to their questions.

STANDARD 2.5 THE DAILY PROGRAM IMMERSES CHILDREN IN A WIDE RANGE OF COMMUNICATIVE EXPERIENCES AND LITERACY EVENTS THAT PROMOTE THEIR CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT, ENCOURAGE THEM TO EXPRESS THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS, AND HELP THEM ATTAIN SELF-DETERMINED GOALS.

INDICATORS

2.5.1 The total day is structured to facilitate children's oral expression. Children talk in order to express their needs, control and direct the behavior of others, solve problems, describe experiences, express views and feelings, impart information, demonstrate courtesy, clarify and reflect on their own thinking, imagine, have fun and pretend. Daily routines and activities:

require only a minimum of quiet time,
provide a familiar context for children to engage in discussions with each other,
facilitate child to child talk more than adult to child talk, and
enable adults to converse with children individually.

2.5.2 When children speak to adults, adults listen attentively and give them time to express themselves completely.

2.5.3 Adults provide words to describe what children are experiencing and check their understanding of words that are spoken, read, or sung.

2.5.4 The teacher helps children acquire practical listening skills such as listening for appreciation and comprehension and learning to value each other's ideas and points of view.

2.5.5 Unit-related pictures and signs, functional print, and literacy products developed by children are displayed around the room and in the learning centers.

2.5.6 The reading program is primarily based on a language expressive approach. Children's daily reading experiences include activities such as:

hearing and telling original stories,
retelling stories from books,
hearing and telling flannel board stories,
learning nursery rhymes, fingerplays, and poems,
dramatizing stories, nursery rhymes, and poems,
reading and re-reading pattern and predictable books,
role playing and fantasy play, and
using puppets.

2.5.7 The books that are read to children each day are identified and selected by the teacher during the planning process, reflect a wide variety of topics, styles, and structures, and support the theme.

2.5.8 Adults read to children in the smallest groups possible so that the experience is personal and interactive.

2.5.9 Children have daily opportunities to interact with books and print. Their opportunities include experiences such as:

reading and writing to carry out daily routines, e.g., attendance, planning and pursuing self-directed learning, choosing a group for story time, and reading the snack menu,
handling books; reading alone, to others, or into a tape recorder,
reading functional print, e.g., newspapers, magazines, greeting cards, maps, product labels, and signs,
using the classroom library,
using the listening center,
lap book reading (individual),
discussing pictures, and
presentations by authors.

2.5.10 The writing program is primarily based on a process approach that enables children to do what they want or can "now." Children's daily writing experiences include small group and individual activities such as:

dictating stories,
writing books,
re-writing pattern books,
keeping a class diary or journal,
developing functional print, e.g., signs, letters, cards, maps, recipes, directions, and labeling photographs, pictures, and art work.

2.5.11 Adults encourage, facilitate, and provide many opportunities for interested children to engage in self-initiated writing for self-determined purposes with little or no emphasis on conventions.

2.5.12 The alphabet is displayed at children's eye level in the writing center. A variety of word and alphabet games are available for interested children.

2.5.13 The writing center and library are visually inviting and well-supplied with a variety of print materials. Adults encourage children to use both.

STANDARD 2.6 CHILDREN'S CURIOSITY ABOUT NATURAL, MAN-MADE, AND SOCIAL PHENOMENA AND THEIR NATURAL INCLINATION TO INVESTIGATE AND SOLVE PROBLEMS IS NURTURED AND STIMULATED THROUGH A DAILY BALANCE OF GUIDED AND INDEPENDENT EXPERIENCES IN SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND MATHEMATICS.

INDICATORS

2.6.1 Children use math to carry out daily program routines such as charting daily attendance or the weather, identifying the portions for snack, "paying" for snack with play money, and identifying if a particular learning center has its quota of children.

2.6.2 Adult-directed and/or learning center activities provide daily opportunities for children to explore such mathematical concepts as whole numbers, fractions, shapes, measurement, position, sequence, order, and organizing data in classes, patterns, and graphs.

2.6.3 Adult-directed activities in math are presented as meaningful and everyday problems that might be solved in different ways. Adult-directed and child-initiated math activities focus on the problem solving process. Adults encourage and help children find more than one answer or more than one way to solve a problem.

2.6.4 Adult-directed activities in math are implemented so that each child has concrete materials to manipulate.

2.6.5 Math vocabulary and concepts are introduced and extended through other curricular activities such as activities in music, literature, and science.

2.6.6 The class and its experiences together are used as the basis for helping children learn about:

themselves and their unique characteristics,
similarities among people regardless of their race, sex, possible handicapping condition, behavior, appearance, and/or ethnic background,
families,
the perceptions, feelings, thoughts and intentions of others,
responsible group participation,
social problem solving, and
multicultural traditions.

2.6.7 The children's environment and personal experiences in it are used as the basis for engaging them in ongoing social living activities in which they:

observe, describe, and discuss change (history),
observe, describe, and discuss the earth's physical features (geography),
make laws and identify the consequences of violating laws (citizenship),
produce, distribute, exchange and consume goods and services (economics), and
live as others live (anthropology, multicultural appreciation).

2.6.8 Children engage in the processes of predicting, gathering data, drawing conclusions, and making generalizations in order to investigate natural and man-made phenomena.

2.6.9 Science-related activities are presented as hands-on experiences in which children are encouraged to consider questions and solve problems. The focus of children's hands-on scientific investigations is on the process and their ability to communicate about the process and findings.

2.6.10 Technological aids, such as computers, are integrated into the exploratory activities that are ordinarily provided to children and do not replace concrete experiences and materials as the major vehicle for learning.

2.6.11 When computers are available for children's use, the software is fun to use and emphasizes creativity and problem solving rather than drill and practice of isolated skills.

STANDARD 2.7 **CHILDREN'S NATURAL INCLINATION TO TEST THEIR LIMITS AND RE-CREATE EXPERIENCE IS NURTURED AND STIMULATED THROUGH A DAILY BALANCE OF GUIDED AND INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES IN MUSIC, MOVEMENT, AND THE ARTS.**

INDICATORS

2.7.1 Children play outside every day, weather permitting.

2.7.2 As part of children's daily outdoor play or indoor activities, the teacher helps them acquire and refine fundamental movements including:

Locomotor movements: walk, run, jump, slide, skip, climb, leap,
Manipulative movements: throw, kick, strike, bounce, roll, catch, and
Stability movements: bend, stretch, twist, turn, balance, swing, dodge.

2.7.3 Children engage in creative movement experiences such as pantomime, responding to rhythms, and performing simple folk dances.

2.7.4 In addition to planned musical experiences, music is integrated into the total day.

2.7.5 Musical experiences include a balance of:

listening to a wide variety of classical and contemporary music including music from other countries,
singing simple songs,
composing songs,
making and playing instruments,
learning about music-related words and concepts, such as tempo, pitch, intensity, and mood, and
hearing stories about composers and listening to their music.

2.7.6 Children's art experiences focus on the exploration of materials, free expression, and the creative process. Children do not produce art on forms that have been cut-out by an adult or reproduce art according to an adult-made model.

2.7.7 Adults may ask children questions about their art but do not require them to dictate sentences about it or explain what it is.

2.7.8 Sufficient materials are in the art center to enable children to freely choose the type of activities in which they will engage. Among children's daily choices are painting, cutting, pasting, constructing, modeling with clay, and drawing.

2.7.9 Adults encourage children to build with the blocks in alternative ways.

2.7.10 Children observe and discuss works of art. Children's own art work and reproductions of great works of art are used to learn about art-related words and concepts, such as line, form, color, texture, pattern, and materials.

2.7.11 Children's art work is displayed with the artist identified.

STANDARD 2.8 **ADULTS CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH CHILDREN CAN SHOW INITIATIVE, ACT INDEPENDENTLY, AND MAKE CHOICES. ADULTS OBSERVE, GUIDE, AND RESPECT CHILDREN AS THEY STRIVE FOR PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE.**

INDICATORS

2.8.1 Adults treat each child with warmth, caring, and respect regardless of his/her socioeconomic, racial, or cultural background or behavior, sex, ability, or appearance.

2.8.2 Adults model and provide opportunities for children to behave in age-appropriate ways that include:

being playful,
assuming responsibility for carrying out routine activities,
exhibiting independence and initiative in planning their own learning,
exhibiting helpful behavior,
helping to develop and follow rules for the care and safety of self, others, materials,
getting along with others; making friends, and
being courteous.

2.8.3 Daily program routines and activities are implemented in a manner that prevents behavior problems from occurring.

2.8.4 Adults discipline children in positive, predictable, and constructive ways and deal with inappropriate behavior at the time that it occurs.

2.8.5 Adults help children negotiate disagreements among themselves but do not solve conflicts for them.

2.8.6 The routines and activities of the daily program are implemented so that children have many opportunities to make choices.

STANDARD 2.9 **THE PREKINDERGARTEN ENVIRONMENT EVOLVES FROM CHILDREN'S NEEDS, INTERESTS, AND EXPERIENCES; FACILITATES THEIR INDEPENDENCE, EXPLORATION, AND DISCOVERY; AND REFLECTS THEIR IDEAS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND PRODUCTS.**

INDICATORS

2.9.1 The environment is organized so that children can function in it with a minimum of adult direction.

2.9.2 The space that is allocated to total group activity is large enough to enable children to sit and/or move without disturbing others.

2.9.3 The location of and space that is allocated to each learning center facilitates the kinds of activities that take place in each one.

2.9.4 Learning centers are separated so that all children can engage in activities of their choice without distracting or being distracted by others.

2.9.5 The materials in the room are available for children's use and are otherwise stored in closets or cupboards.

2.9.6 Displays of children's work reflect diversity and individuality. They do not reflect the standards or performances of adults.

2.9.7 The total room reflects children's current experiences and work; little or no use is made of commercial bulletin boards.

2.9.8 The total room is bright and cheerful but not visually overwhelming.

STANDARD 2.10 **CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY ARE ENSURED THROUGHOUT EACH PROGRAM DAY.**

INDICATORS

2.10.1 Children are supervised by an adult at all times.

2.10.2 The prekindergarten classroom is located in a clean, safe, well-lit, and well-ventilated area.

2.10.3 Furniture in the prekindergarten classroom is in good repair and appropriate in size for the children.

2.10.4 Toilets and sinks are easily accessible to children. Children wash their hands after toileting and before eating.

2.10.5 Materials and objects in the learning environment are clean and in good condition.

2.10.6 Children's indoor space is free from bugs and insects, asbestos, and radioactive gas (radon).

2.10.7 Poisons and other potentially harmful chemicals are always inaccessible to children.

2.10.8 The outdoor play area is free of glass, litter, traffic, strangers, and other potential dangers.

2.10.9 Over time, children learn about disease prevention, nutrition, first aid, accident prevention, and personal safety in the classroom and out-of-doors.

2.10.10 School personnel maintain health records on each child, including information about immunizations, allergies, and chronic illnesses.

2.10.11 The school/teacher maintain emergency contact information on each child.

2.10.12 Children are released only to persons who are authorized to pick them up. Specific procedures are developed and used to ensure the welfare and safety for children who are not picked up on time.

2.10.13 Suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect are promptly reported to the appropriate persons and agencies.

3.0 HOME-SCHOOL COOPERATION

STANDARD 3.1 COOPERATION BETWEEN THE HOME AND SCHOOL RESULTS IN PARENTAL SUPPORT OF AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE TOTAL SCHOOL PROGRAM.

INDICATORS

3.1.1 Information about the program is given to parents at the beginning of each school year. The information includes:

program philosophy and goals,
program operation policies including procedures for non-attendance,
program goals and classroom methods for attaining program goals,

school focus for home-school cooperation,
expectations for parent/family participation,
ways parents can promote learning outside of school, and
ways parents can help children be successful in school.

3.1.2 Children's legal guardians and other family members are involved in school-based activities. A log of their involvement is maintained.

3.1.3 Procedures are shared with classroom volunteers that enable them to work directly with children in developmentally appropriate ways.

3.1.4 Specific strategies are identified and used to involve parents in their children's learning both inside and outside of school.

3.1.5 Staff take advantage of school and community meetings to interact with parents and build rapport for sustaining ongoing communication.

3.1.6 Communication with all parents is sustained through phone calls, notes, newsletters, parent sessions, and home visits.

3.1.7 Information is shared with parents that promotes their understanding of children's growth and development and how young children learn.

3.1.8 Parents are involved in evaluating the program each year.

4.0 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

STANDARD 4.1 **THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND/OR SCHOOL SEEKS AND PROVIDES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE EARLY LEARNING STAFF IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN THEIR COMPETENCIES IN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN.**

INDICATORS

4.1.1 At least once a year, a building administrator meets with the prekindergarten staff to formulate or revise the framework plan that will be used as the basis for providing a developmentally appropriate program.

4.1.2 The school system designs and implements a staff development program to ensure that the prekindergarten staff possesses the attitudes, information, and skills needed to implement a developmentally appropriate program. Prekindergarten and kindergarten staff may be trained together.

4.1.3 Each year the prekindergarten teacher participates in professional development opportunities that increase his/her knowledge of state-of-the art early childhood practices.

4.1.4 The prekindergarten teacher has at least one opportunity to observe and/or work with an exemplary peer.

4.1.5 The building administrators' (principal and assistant principal) understanding of the elements and methods involved in implementing a developmentally appropriate program are enhanced through participation in professional development activities.

4.1.6 The program supervisor stays abreast of state and national early childhood perspectives through participation in activities sponsored by the Maryland State Department of Education and other organizations.

5.0 CONTINUITY OF LEARNING, PREKINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE ONE

STANDARD 5.1 **PREKINDERGARTEN, KINDERGARTEN, AND FIRST GRADE ARE VIEWED AS A SINGLE UNIT, EACH LEVEL OF WHICH ACCEPTS CHILDREN 'AS THEY ARE' AND PROVIDES AGE AND INDIVIDUALLY APPROPRIATE LEARNING EXPERIENCES THAT ENABLE EACH CHILD TO PROGRESS AS FAR AS HIS/HER OWN DEVELOPING INTERESTS AND ABILITIES ALLOW.**

INDICATORS

5.1.1 Organizational practices for prekindergarten through first grade indicate that retention and transitional classes are not viewed as viable options to appropriate programming.

5.1.2 The kindergarten and first grade curricula reflect the Maryland State Department of Education's philosophy for the early learning years and curricular frameworks for kindergarten and the content areas.

5.1.3 The curriculum is continuous and sequential from prekindergarten through grade one.

5.1.4 Kindergarten and first grade children progress at their own pace as their interests and abilities develop. Grade level boundaries do not determine where children begin or how far they are allowed or encouraged to progress.

5.1.5 The kindergarten and first grade curriculum are implemented in developmentally appropriate ways. Appropriate practices include:

the use of an integrated approach,
little emphasis on isolated and decontextualized skill development,
using children's play to develop problem solving and decisionmaking skills,
a daily balance of child-initiated and teacher-directed learning experiences,
individual and small group learning most of the time,
concrete and experiential learning with little use made of workbooks, dittos and passive learning methods,
daily opportunities to learn by interacting with peers,
daily opportunities for experiences in art, literature and music, and outdoor play,
assessment through observation of children's performance and listening to them as they talk, and
respect for individual and cultural differences.

5.1.6 The kindergarten and first grade language arts program uses a holistic approach that includes:

many daily opportunities for oral expression,
responding to and asking questions at a variety of levels,
learning to read by choosing what one reads; learning to write by choosing one's purposes for writing,
reading and developing many forms of print (alone and in small groups),
reading and writing to carry out daily routines,
teaching skills when children need them in order to accomplish a larger goal rather than in the artificial order in which they are introduced in a basal reading or phonics program,
teaching skills in small groups in ways that enable each child to be an active learner,
limited reliance on a basal reading program,
composing, telling, and re-telling stories and poems,
reading to children everyday, and
integrating language arts with science, social studies, mathematics, and the arts.

5.1.7 The math program in kindergarten and first grade focuses on problem solving and enables children to explore and discover mathematical relationships through firsthand experiences with concrete materials. Limited use is made of rote learning methods.

5.1.8 School staff monitor and assess the effectiveness of the interventions provided to kindergarten and first graders who are identified as being at-risk on the basis of Early Identification and Intervention Process screening.

5.1.9 Specific strategies are identified and used to involve parents in their children's learning both inside and outside of school.

5.1.10 The principal and kindergarten and first grade teachers participate in professional development opportunities to maintain or increase their competencies in using developmentally appropriate practices with young learners.

5.1.11 At least once a year the principal and early learning staff meet together to assess the quality and effectiveness of the program. Results of the assessment are used to modify and strengthen the program.

6.0 PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

STANDARD 6.1 THE SCHOOL (SYSTEM) EVALUATES ITS EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM ON AN ANNUAL BASIS AND USES THE RESULTS TO ACKNOWLEDGE ITS STRENGTHS AND ADDRESS ITS WEAKNESSES.

INDICATORS

6.1.1 The school (system) participates in the process of self-appraisal using the Maryland State Department of Education's Standards for Implementing Quality Prekindergarten Education Programs.

6.1.2 The school (system) participates in on-site program reviews conducted by the Maryland State Department of Education.

6.1.3 The school (system) uses the results of internal or external program reviews as the basis for program improvement.

6.1.4 When beginning-to-end-of-year prekindergarten program effects are evaluated, multiple indicators are used.

6.1.5 When a standardized test is used to evaluate beginning-to-end-of-year prekindergarten program effects, a random sampling method is used. No more than four children are tested per program site.

6.1.6 The school (system) uses multiple indicators to evaluate the impact of prekindergarten participation on children's development and school performance at second grade and beyond.

6.1.7 With the local superintendent's agreement, the school system participates in Maryland State Department of Education evaluations of the prekindergarten program.

7.0 COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMMING

STANDARD 7.1 **THE SCHOOL SYSTEM PROVIDES LEADERSHIP IN PROMOTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS THAT MEET THE CHILD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION NEEDS OF FAMILIES IN THE COMMUNITY.**

INDICATORS

7.1.1 The school maintains an updated list of licensed family and group care facilities and educational programs that are available to children ages 3-5. Information on the list identifies each program by name, location, type, and hours and days of operation.

7.1.2 The school maintains a list of before and after school programs that are available to young children. Information on the list identifies programs by name, location, type, and hours and days of operation.

7.1.3 The school disseminates information to parents about the early childhood education programs and licensed child care facilities in the community.

7.1.4 Data is accessible to the school that indicates the child care/early childhood education needs of families in the community, for example:

the number of parents who need, but do not have affordable/accessible child care for their 3-6 year olds,
the number of parents who need but do not have before and/or after school care for their elementary grade children, and
the number of families who want but are unserved by educational programs for four-year-olds.

7.1.5 School staff network with child care/education providers to whom or from whom their prekindergarten and kindergarten students go and come in order to ensure that the transitions are not disruptive to their healthy development.

7.1.6 The school uses a transition form that enables staff to obtain information about children from their most recent previous child care/education providers. The transition form is used with each parent's written permission.

7.1.7 The school (system) collaborates with other agencies in examining family needs for child care and early childhood education. Plans for expansion of the early childhood ecosystem take existing providers/services into consideration.

7.1.8 The school (system) collaborates with other community agencies in order to increase parent's access to prekindergarten and/or licensed child care programs that encompass the full working day.

7.1.9 The school facilitates the development and implementation of innovative programs that address the child care/educational needs of families in the community.

APPENDIX

The materials and supplies listed below describe the minimum contents of well-supplied learning centers in the prekindergarten classroom.

Center	Materials
Library	Pictures Books, (pictures, patterned, wordless) Reference books Books made with children Books with tapes, records and/or filmstrips Magazines, newspapers, catalogs Functional print (menus, greeting cards, map, lists, etc.) Chart stories made with children Children's original poems and stories Chairs, pillows Carpet, rug, or carpet squares Book rack Audio-visual materials (tape, records, record player) Props that match books Stuffed animals
Reading/Writing	Chalkboard Writing implements (chalk, pencils, ink pens, magic markers, crayons) Erasers (pencil and chalk) Rubber stamps/stamp pads Used postage stamps; paste Paper of all kinds; lined and unlined Envelopes Alphabet blocks, alphabet cards Moveable letters Word cards with words and pictures (rebuses) Pictionaries Picture, alphabet, and word games Print models (poems, chart stories, word lists, etc.) Functional print Book jackets/posters Pictures Bulletin board for children to display their work Mail box/message center Low shelf for organizing supplies and materials

Center	Materials
Math	Number blocks and cubes Pegs and peg boards Beads and string Collections (buttons, stones, marbles, spools, straws) Plastic plates or lids for making sets Egg cartons Balance/scale Unifix cubes Dominoes Magnetic numbers, number line Rulers Measuring cups and spoons Rods of graduated sizes Cuisenaire rods Parquetry blocks/pattern cards Geometric shapes of various sizes Geoboards Pennies and other coins Teacher-made math games Math concept books Math concept puzzles Paper, pencil, crayons, and erasers
Housekeeping	Stove Sink Refrigerator Table and chairs Cabinet or shelves Doll bed Doll carriage Mirror(s) Telephone Pictures Pots and pans Eating utensils Cooking utensils Empty product boxes Housekeeping tools (mop, broom, ironing board, iron, clothespins, clothesline, dustpan, bucket, sponge) Jewelry and dress up clothes Dolls (male, female, ethnic, handicapped) Doll clothes Prop boxes with tools and clothes for various occupations Functional reading materials Pictures

Center	Materials
Grocery Store (example only)	Shelves Empty produce boxes and cans Plastic fruits and vegetables Magazines/newspapers Paper and plastic bags (small) Cash register Coins and paper money Product category signs Grocery carts Shopping lists with words and pictures Paper and pencil for making shopping lists
Blocks	Cardboard blocks Wooden unit blocks Durable cardboard boxes of various sizes Rubber animals and people Large and small vehicles Traffic and other functional signs Materials for making and posting signs Pictures
Sand Table	Buckets of various sizes Plastic containers of all sizes Shovels and scoops Funnels Sieves, strainers, containers with holes Measuring cups Scale or balance Small trucks and cars
Water Table	Buckets of various sizes Plastic containers of all sizes Funnels Measuring cup Baster Rubber hoses Sieves, strainers, containers with holes Sponges Liquid detergent Egg beater Objects that sink and float Small boats Straws Water pump Water wheel Hose

Center	Materials
Games/Puzzles	Puzzles Visual discrimination games Association games Concept games Attribute games Bingo Lotto Pattern cards Sorting trays Beads and string Plastic interlocking blocks Lincoln Logs Tinker Toys Items to snap, button, zipper, and lace Items to take apart and put back together
Art	Easels Tempera paint Finger paint Paint brushes Toothbrushes Large paper (minimum size 12" X 18") Newspaper Construction and finger paint paper Crayons Chalk Pencils Playdough or clay Felt markers Paste/glue Tape Scissors Stapler Hole punch String Sponges Fabric scraps Yarn Paper towels Bulletin board or clothesline for displaying art Clothespins, tacks Art posters

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